

The Mystery of a Gem.

(Original.)

A small market wagon drawn by one bony horse pulled up in front of a pawnbroker's shop in Paris. A young countryman and a girl sat on a cross-board at the fore end, the man a strapping fellow, the girl comely and rosy as a peony. The girl descended from the seat and went into the pawnbroker's. He was a white-headed old man and, unlike most of his trade, benevolent looking.

"I would like, monsieur, if you would be so kind as to lend me a hundred francs on this."

She produced a pearl the size of a nutmeg. It was of a very unusual shade. The pawnbroker looked at it for a long while, then said:

"How did you come by it?"

"Alphonse—Alphonse is my name—has had it ever since his mother died. We wish to be married, and we have no means."

"How long ago did Alphonse's mother die?"

"When Alphonse was a baby, more than twenty years ago."

"And where did Alphonse's mother get it?"

"Alphonse's mother was when young lady's maid to a countess. Just before the countess' death she gave it to her maid. The countess died of smallpox, and all but her maid had deserted her."

"Did the countess say anything about the value of the gift?"

"How could she since she was dying and could scarcely speak? Don't you think it is worth so much as a hundred francs? Can't you lend anything on it?" she asked anxiously.

"Does Alphonse wish to sell it?"

"He has kept it for his mother's sake. He never knew a mother's love, but he thinks a great deal about what his mother was like. He would rather pawn it."

There was a look of truthfulness and innocence in the girl's face that won the old man's confidence.

"So you and Alphonse are lovers and wish to borrow 100 francs on this for the purpose of being married?"

"Yes, monsieur, if you think it is worth so much."

The pawnbroker handed her four napoleons, took her address and sent her off jubilant. He saw her go out and communicate her happiness to her lover by showing him the four shining gold pieces. Then they drove away, both talking at once and gesticulating. Evidently they had never before had such a windfall.

The pawnbroker possessed a small library of books giving the history of valuable articles. As soon as the girl had gone he took down a volume on celebrated gems that had passed through strange hands. Turning over the leaves, he at last came to an account of the disappearance about a century and a half ago of two large diamonds from the English crown. A pearl of extraordinary size and luster had disappeared at the same time. No trace had ever been discovered of the missing gems, and after so long a period no expectation was entertained of their recovery.

Here was a little gem the size of the tip of a lady's finger that a peasant had kept from his babyhood and was doubtful if he could borrow \$20 on it. Had it been displayed in a jeweler's case, of the thousands who looked at it not one would probably have seen any difference between it and the large and brilliant jewels resting beside it. But for half a century this old pawnbroker had done nothing but inspect valuable articles, chiefly jewels. To him the pearl stood alone. That singular something which has no identity, no personality, no essence, but which we call experience, told him that he had in his possession a gem that a hundred and fifty years ago had been stolen from the English crown.

A week passed. The couple who had returned the jewel were celebrating their wedding day. There was little careworthiness to celebrate, but they made the most of what they had. A letter came by the post summoning them to Paris at once to see the pawnbroker. They were much frightened, fearing that they were to be called upon to redeem the pearl, and they had spent the money. Alphonse put the horse in the wagon, and they drove into the city.

When they reached the pawnbroker's he sent them into a private room, where they waited half an hour in suspense. Then the pawnbroker entered with a man, an Englishman.

"This is the couple," the former said. "You may question them if you like, but you will get nothing."

"The government will be happy to pay the reward that has so long been offered and ask no questions," replied the other.

The Englishman took from a wallet three notes, two for £1,000 each and one for £500, equivalent to about \$12,000, and handed them to the groom, who drew back, frightened.

"A wedding present for you," said the pawnbroker, and he gave an explanation of how the money came to be paid him. At first Alphonse feared they were trying to draw him into a trap. Indeed, he would not take the money till he had called in a notary to whom he was accustomed to sell vegetables who looked the matter through carefully and assured him that the transaction was fair and square.

On their wedding night, after placing their fortunes in a savings bank, the young couple drove their little cart home with a happiness in their hearts that came to them but once in their lives.

Nothing was ever learned as to the wanderings of the pearl from the time it was taken from the British crown till it was given to the peasant's mother.

DORA IRENE STEVENS.

Her Sweet Friend.

Miss Eider—The idea of his pretending that my hair was gray! Miss Peppery—Ridiculous! Miss Eider—Wasn't it, though? Miss Peppery—Yes. Just as if you'd buy my hair—Exchange.

THEIR GOLDEN WEDDING

Mr. and Mrs. George W. Colston Celebrated

AT WHITE RIVER JUNCTION

He is the Oldest Odd Fellow in the State—Mr. and Mrs. John B. Morse of Gageville Also Celebrate.

White River Junction, March 9.—Mr. and Mrs. George W. Colston of this village Saturday celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary and gave a dinner at their home on Main street.

The tables were very attractive with cut flowers. Thirty covers were laid, the guests including the children, grandchildren and relatives and friends. From 1 to 5 during the afternoon and from 7 to 10 in the evening a reception was held and many called to offer congratulations. A delegation from Quechee River lodge, L. O. O. F., at Woodstock were among the guests. There were many remembrances, including a purse of gold from the children.

Mr. Colston was born in Hartland and has lived in this village for about 10 years. He is 73 years old. "I've always been a very hard working man," said he, speaking of his life. "I had to work to bring up my family. I began with nothing and I've held out."

In 50 years Mr. Colston has not had a physician and he is in excellent health and works every day. He has always voted the Republican ticket and is particularly interested in the affairs of the town. The only office he has held is that of school committee in Hartland. He has never lived outside the state.

Mr. Colston is the oldest Odd Fellow in point of membership in the state, having joined the old Windsor lodge at Woodstock 52 years ago. During the war this lodge disbanded for a number of years he was not identified with any lodge. Fourteen years ago he became a member of Quechee River lodge at Woodstock, Vt. There are said to be only two members living who belonged to the old Windsor lodge and several years ago at a celebration given by the present order at Windsor, Mr. Colston, together with these two members, were made the guests of honor.

Mr. and Mrs. Colston were married in Hartland March 7, 1858, by Rev. O. G. Woodbury, a Universalist clergyman. Mrs. Colston, who was Miss Julia May, was born in Windsor 63 years ago.

They have four children, Mrs. W. G. Sawyer, who resides in this village; Mrs. Horace F. Slattery of Woodstock; Mrs. George Bailey of Hartford and Mr. Arthur G. Colston, residing in West Chester, Penn.

Mr. and Mrs. Morse of Gageville, celebrate Golden Wedding Anniversary.

Bellows Falls, March 9.—Mr. and Mrs. John B. Morse celebrated their golden wedding at their home in Gageville Saturday afternoon. They received numerous presents from their friends who called during the afternoon and evening to extend congratulations.

Mr. Morse was born in Westminster, Vt., Jan. 28, 1813. Mrs. Lucinda Morse, who was Lucinda Thompson, was born in Londonderry, Vt., May 14, 1813. Nearly all their married life has been spent in Westminster, Vt. Four children were born to them, only one of whom is living.

Mr. Morse is a member of the Grand Army and has an honorable war record. Mrs. Morse is a member of the relief corps and active in works of charity. Both Mr. and Mrs. Morse are ardent Methodists and have been for 35 years.

GOLD MADNESS.

A Passion For Literally Reveling in the Yellow Metal.

A singular passion for literally reveling in gold is exhibited now and then by men who have suddenly become rich. Some years ago a London Journalist who had speculated in railroad stocks netted \$5,000 as the result of a lucky venture. Drawing it in gold, the fortunate man repaired to a hotel, emptied the bags of gold in the bed and went to sleep literally in the sands of Potosi. The man was so crazed by his good fortune that he found little scrutable pleasure in reveling in a golden bath.

Paganini, the violinist, when he received the proceeds of his concerts—he insisted upon being paid in gold—used to wash his hands in sovereigns.

A French novelist, Soulie, wrote a book entitled "The Memoirs of the Devil." It took. The publishers paid him for the first volume \$10,000 in gold. The author carried the gold to his bedroom, poured it into a footbath and enjoyed for half an hour the excitement of moving his feet to and fro in a bath of gold coins, smoking meanwhile the biggest of Havanas.

A Boston merchant of great wealth, believing certain symptoms indicated that he would become insane, consulted a specialist and, under his advice, became an inmate of a private asylum. For twelve years there his recreation was piling up gold coins and then knocking them over. At times he washed his hands in gold eagles and half eagles. At the end of the long seclusion he returned to his counting room and in twelve months confirmed the thoroughness of his recovery by amassing \$500,000.—St. Louis Republic

WHOBODY?

Everybody tells me things I should know, But Nobody tells me why they are so. Somebody knows why things must be, But Whobody's going to teach it to me.

Anybody seems to be able to tell, But Nobody seems to be able to tell. But sometimes clouds will darken the sky, Whobody's going to tell me why? Peter McArthur in Woman's Home Companion.

Energy is well-nourished muscles plus well-nourished nerves.

Unedda Biscuit

are the greatest energy-makers of all the wheat foods.

5¢ In dust tight, moisture proof packages. Never sold in bulk.

NATIONAL BISCUIT COMPANY

OPERA HOUSE NOTES.

W. A. Whitecar in an Old Sweetheart of Mine.

"Life on the Plains" usually means a melodramatic setting of a thrashery, well thrashed out years ago. In the new Texan romance in which W. A. Whitecar is starring this season, called "An Old Sweetheart of Mine," after James Whitcomb Riley's famous poem, it is anything but thrashery or melodramatic. The tale is strong and sweet, the characters are finely etched out of truth and the plot is new and intimately told. The central figure, Dick Scott, is

The Viceroy at Canton is Blamed

ARMS MUST BE RESTORED

The Chinese Minister Tries to Prove That the Vessel Was Not in Portuguese Waters.

Tokio, March 9.—Japan will not resort to force in connection with the seizure of the steamer Tatsu unless compelled to do so by the action of China. This statement was given on Saturday by a high authority in the foreign office at Tokio, who added: "We propose to exercise the utmost patience, and fully understand the difficulty the central government of China has in dealing with viceroys who possess extensive constitutional powers. It is quite apparent that the viceroy of Canton acted hastily in relying upon information which stated that the Tatsu was engaged in smuggling arms. She was undoubtedly there, that he had a right to seize the vessel, whom the facts show that the vessel's papers, including a manifest of arms consigned in regular form to a firm in Macao, were entirely legal. A representative of the firm at Macao boarded the vessel, accompanied by the Portuguese authorities, before her seizure by a Chinese vessel. 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